

## 1. Interim Elections Bye-Laws

- 1.1. The students' union has a responsibility to ensure that any elections or student voice decision making processes held within the students' union are fair and democratic.
- 1.2. The running of fair elections shall be the responsibility of the Returning Officer, on behalf of the Board of Trustees. They shall ensure the elections are run in accordance with the Memorandum & Articles and Bye-Laws.
- 1.3. For the avoidance of doubt, these rules apply to all democratic procedures within the students' union including:
  - 1.3.1.1. Elections
  - 1.3.1.2. Any other decision-making procedures as determined by the Returning Officer

## 2. Sabbatical Officer Trustees

- 2.1. The following roles are elected by the students' union and are considered to be Sabbatical Officer Trustees and Major Office Holders of the Students' Union for the purposes of the Articles and the Education Act 1994:
  - 2.1.1. Undergraduate Officer
  - 2.1.2. Postgraduate Officer
  - 2.1.3. Welfare, Equity & Inclusion Officer
  - 2.1.4. Communities and Common Rooms Officer
- 2.2. Major Office Holders of the Students' Union shall be subject to the following eligibility criteria:
  - 2.2.1. Candidates must be current members of the students' union at the time of the election
  - 2.2.2. Candidates for the Undergraduate Officer must be a current Undergraduate student
  - 2.2.3. Candidates for the Postgraduate Officer must be a current Postgraduate student
- 2.3. Candidates may only run for 1 Major Office Holder position at a time
- 2.4. Sabbatical Officer Trustees are elected for one-year terms starting normally in Week 9 of Trinity Term, but formal start dates shall be confirmed in any employment contract
- 2.5. Sabbatical Officer Trustees may serve up to a maximum of two terms; these terms may

be consecutive or non-consecutive

- 2.6. Sabbatical Officer Trustees will be subject to an employment contract and job description as agreed by the Trustee Board and shall be remunerated in accordance with the students' union's remuneration policy.

### **3. Other Offices**

- 3.1. The Students' Union may also elect other office holders from time to time including:
  - 3.1.1. Community Officers
  - 3.1.2. Conference of Common Room Committee positions
  - 3.1.3. Student Trustees
- 3.2. These office holders shall not be deemed major office holders of the students' union

### **4. Voting**

- 4.1. Elections or bye-elections can be held in any term subject to the following timelines:
  - 4.1.1. Notice of the election must be given by the Friday of Week -1
  - 4.1.2. Nominations open 00:01 Friday of Week 0
  - 4.1.3. Nominations Deadline: 00:01 Friday of Week 2
  - 4.1.4. Campaigning Period Begins: 00:01 Tuesday of Week 3
  - 4.1.5. Voting is open between 08:00 Monday of Week 4 and 18:00 Thursday of Week 4
  - 4.1.6. Results shall normally be declared and announced by 18:00 Friday of Week 4
- 4.2. The Returning Officer shall have the discretion to amend the above timelines at any time
- 4.3. Sabbatical Officer Trustee elections will normally take place in Hilary Term, however elections or bye-elections may take place within any term in order to fill vacancies
- 4.4. All elections shall include the option to vote to Re-Open Nominations (RON)
- 4.5. All student members of the students' union, as defined in Article 6.3 are eligible to vote
- 4.6. All elections shall be conducted by secret, cross campus ballot, normally through the Union's electronic voting system. However, should the voting system fail for whatever reason, the Returning Officer may approve an alternative mechanism (such as a paper vote)
- 4.7. Votes will be cast and counted using the Single Transferable Voting mechanism

### **5. Returning Officer**

- 5.1. There will be a Returning Officer who will supervise the conduct of all elections to which this bye law applies.

- 5.2. The Returning Officer will be appointed on an annual basis by the Trustee Board. Their appointment will be reported to the student body normally in Michaelmas each year.
- 5.3. The Returning Officer may not be any of the following:
  - 5.3.1. A member of the Students' Union,
  - 5.3.2. A trustee of the Students' Union, or
  - 5.3.3. an employee of the Students' Union.
- 5.4. The Returning Officer will appoint a member or members of the Students' Union staff to act as the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 5.5. The Deputy Returning Officer, subject to the approval of the Returning Officer, will issue Operational Guidelines to all Students' Union Staff Members involved in the administration of an election, which will govern their conduct.
- 5.6. The Returning Officer is required to declare the validity of results prior to the announcement to student members
- 5.7. The Returning Officer is required to submit a report to the Union's Trustee Board and the University's Student Life Subcommittee annually

## **6. Conduct**

- 6.1. All candidates must always abide by the Union's Candidate Agreement and University Statute XI
- 6.2. Additionally, candidates or any other member must not engage in any behavior that impacts, or is perceived to impact the integrity of the election including inter alia:
  - 6.2.1. Making unlawful, false or misleading statements
  - 6.2.2. Interference with any voting system
  - 6.2.3. Harassing or bullying candidates or voters
  - 6.2.4. Any other action which may materially compromise the integrity of the election
- 6.3. Specifically, candidates and other members must ensure that:
  - 6.3.1. Endorsements from common rooms, societies and other student groups are obtained fairly
  - 6.3.2. Mailing lists and other online or messaging forums are not abused for campaigning purposes

## **7. Complaints**

- 7.1. Any complaints regarding a candidate or election must be submitted via the Complaints Form available on the students' union website before the close of voting during any given election

- 7.2. Complaints must be accompanied by substantiating evidence
- 7.3. Complaints will first be assessed by the Deputy Returning Officer who will determine whether a complaint has been upheld or not
- 7.4. Where a complaint is upheld, the Deputy Returning Officer will determine any appropriate penalty which may include, inter alia:
  - 7.4.1. A formal reprimand or warning
  - 7.4.2. A campaign ban for a candidate in question for a set period of time
  - 7.4.3. Withdrawal of a candidate from the elections
- 7.5. If a complaint demonstrates that the integrity of the election has been materially compromised, the Deputy Returning Officer may refer the complaint directly to the Returning Officer who may determine the results of the election invalid, in which case the election shall be re-run
- 7.6. Complainants and candidates may appeal any decision made by the Deputy Returning Officer to the Returning Officer within 12 hours of the Deputy Returning Officer's decision and in any case no later than the close of voting.
- 7.7. Appeals must meet one of the following criteria:
  - 7.7.1. That there is new information or evidence which was not available to the Deputy Returning Officer
  - 7.7.2. That there is evidence that the Deputy Returning Officer has breached the Union's bye-laws or other governing documents
- 7.8. Where an appeal is upheld, the Returning Officer will determine an appropriate remedy
- 7.9. The Returning Officer's decision will be final
- 7.10. A log of all complaints and their outcomes shall be published on the Union's website no later than 1 week after the close of elections

## **8. Expenditure**

- 8.1. Expenditure limits for candidates will be set from time to time by the Returning
- 8.2. Officer. Currently, these spending limits are as follows:
  - 8.2.1. each Candidate in an election is £60
- 8.3. All receipts for expenditure must be submitted electronically to [elections@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:elections@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk) within 1 hour of the close of voting
- 8.4. Candidates who fail to submit all evidence of expenditure will not be reimbursed and may be subject to penalty at the discretion of the Returning Officer